

## **Calgary's Community Associations. Vital to communities or irrelevant? New Report**

For Immediate Release

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Calgary - Calgary has a network of 151 volunteer-run, non-profit community associations (CAs). They provide programs and amenities to neighbourhoods and are considered an integral part of the city's fabric. These CAs need clearly defined roles as they work to deliver programs and services, and advocate on local planning issues.

But what exactly are those roles? Most Calgarians likely don't know what their community association does or where the money comes from. This matters, because the City of Calgary is about to undertake a review of the role of community associations - Calgarians need to know what's at stake, and what the options are.

Today, The School of Public Policy with authors Brian W. Conger, Pernille Goodbrand and Jyoti Gondek released a report that looks at the current state of CA infrastructure, both physical and human, funding for CAs, and looks to Seattle and Portland for potential models. According to co-author Brian W. Conger, "The City of Calgary needs to decide the extent of its own future involvement in community governance, including strengthening the support services already provided, taking a leadership role in neighbourhood representation, or downloading authority and resources to a dedicated third-party, such as the non-profit Federation of Calgary Communities. And, the City needs to take a position on the funding model for community associations. Community associations play a major role in local recreation, but they also advise the City of Calgary on zoning issues, but often lack the mandate to be effective. But these are volunteer run organizations. As such, changes need to be made carefully, so as not to alienate a small but committed corps of community leaders and activists."

Calgary's CAs have come a long way from the informal community "get-togethers" of the early 20th century. As they continue to evolve, The City has an important role to play in ensuring that CA's can continue to provide the programming and services Calgarians expect and enjoy.

The paper can be downloaded at [www.policyschool.ca/publications/](http://www.policyschool.ca/publications/)

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